4. Quarterly Block Allocation Scheme for repair of ships has been dispensed with entirely and Reserve Bank of India now releases foreign exchange for ship repair/dry docking and spares for imported capital goods without any value limit.

5. Freight charges on account of movement of fertilizer and petroleum products are now allowed to be paid in convertible currency on par with other commodities.

6. Certain Sections of Merchant Shipping Act were considered by foreign lenders as impediments to the enforcement of the rights of lenders in case of loan defaults and consequent requirement of foreclosure of the mortgage. These sections have now been amended, to facilitate Inditn Shipping Companies to raise external commercial borrowing for ship acquisition from abroad.

7. Shipping Corporation of India has acquired three cellular container vessels in December, 1993 and January, 1994.

Movement of Goverment and Public Sector Cargoes

2535. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the share of foreign flag vessels in moving cargo for transchart which is responsible for moving Government and Public Sector cargoes, has been increasing;

(b) whether the Indian shipping companies were permitted for chartering out Indian flag vessels without obtaining permission from the Director General of Shipping; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to move the Government and Public Sector cargoes without facing difficulty in getting vessels?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir. The share of foreign flag vessels in the carriage of Government and Public Sector cargoes through. Transchart during the last five calendar years has been as under:—

1989	41.46%
1990	33.58%
1991	38.54%
1992	45.24%
1993	41.17%

(b) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to increase the Indian tonnage and share of Indian ships, a number of steps have been taken. These include automatic approval for (a) acquisition of ships from Indian shipyards, (b) replacement tonnage, (c) acpuisition of vessels by Ship Owning Companies except Crude tankers and OSVs, (d) sale of ships and retention of sale proceed to utilise for fresh acquisition, acquisition of vessels through bare-boat charter-cum demise ,amendment in the Merchant Shipping act to facilitate financing of ship acquisition etc.

संसद सदस्यों द्वारा जल भूतल परिवहन मंत्रालय को भेजे गये पत्रों का निपटारा

2536. **श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल :** क्या **जल भूतल परिवहन** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) संसद सदस्यों द्वारा उनके मंत्रालय को 1 अप्रैल, 1990 से 31 मार्च 1993 तक कितने पत्र लिखे गए और उनका वर्षवार ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ख) उनमें से कितने पत्रों की प्राप्ति स्वीकृति भेजी गयी;

(ग) कितने पत्रों के अंतिम उत्तर भेजे गए; और

(घ) भेजे गए इन अंतिम पत्रों में से कितने पत्रों के उत्तर नकारात्मक और कितने के सकारात्मक थे ?